Women's Language Features Used by the Character in *Encanto* Movie

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Abstract— This study examines the distinctions between men and women when speaking, identifies women's language features based on Lakoff's women's language features theory (1975), and the dominating features employed by the character. Women speak more politely to avoid overstepping the addressees' rights. Therefore, women are well-known as more powerless than men because women also apply the terms of avoidance of swearing strong words in their statements. Thus, the researcher analyzed *Encanto* movie that analyzed women's language features used by *Encanto*'s women characters. The researcher chose the Encanto movie because women mostly play in this movie. This movie also shows some expressions that indicate the language used by women and men in society differently. The research was qualitative, primarily descriptive research. The study uses the *Encanto* movie as the primary data and the movie's script as secondary data to complement the analysis. While collecting data, the researcher watched the movie several times, read the script carefully, and noted the women's utterances in the movie. Through the analysis, the researcher did, found 2 lexical hedges (15,4%), 2 tag questions (15,4%), 2 rising intonation (15,4%), 2 intensifiers (15,4%), 2 'hypercorrect grammar' (15,4%), 1 avoidance of swear strong words (7,6%), and 2 emphatic stress (15,4%). The last are 'empty' adjectives, 'super' polite forms, and precise color terms that have no case (0%). In general, the features stated by Lakoff have a balanced use in this movie.

Keywords: *Women's Language Features, Lakoff, Encanto, Film Movie*

Abstrak—Penelitian ini membahas tentang perbedaan penuturan wanita dan pria, mengidentifikasi fitur bahasa wanita berdasarkan teori fitur ucapan wanita oleh Lakoff (1975), dan fitur dominan yang digunakan oleh karakter tersebut. Wanita berbicara lebih sopan untuk menghindari melangkahi hak-hak lawan bicara. Oleh karena itu, perempuan dikenal lebih tidak berdaya dibandingkan laki-laki karena perempuan juga menerapkan ketentuan penghindaran kata-kata kasar dalam pernyataannya. Dengan demikian, peneliti menganalisis film *Encanto* yang menganalisis fitur bahasa wanita yang digunakan oleh karakter wanita pada film *Encanto*. Peneliti memilih film *Encanto* karena karakter perempuan dominan bermain di dalam film ini. Film ini juga menampilkan beberapa ungkapan yang menunjukkan bahasa yang digunakan perempuan dan laki-laki dalam masyarakat berbeda. Jenis penelitian yang dilakukan adalah penelitian kualitatif, khususnya penelitian deskriptif. Studi ini menggunakan film *Encanto* sebagai data primer dan naskah film sebagai data sekunder untuk melengkapi analisis dengan teori fitur bahasa wanita oleh Lakoff. Selama mengumpulkan data, peneliti menonton film tersebut beberapa kali, membaca naskahnya dengan cermat, dan mencatat ucapan-ucapan para wanita dalam film tersebut. Melalui analisis yang dilakukan peneliti, ditemukan 2 lexical hedges (15,4%), 2 tag question (15,4%), 2 rising intonation (15,4%), 2 intensifiers (15,4%), 2 'hypercorrect grammar' (15,4%), 1 avoidance of swear strong words (7,6%), dan 2 emphatic stress (15,4%). Yang terakhir adalah 'empty'

adjectives, 'super' polite forms, dan precise color terms yang tidak memiliki kasus (0%). Secara umum, fitur-fitur yang dikemukakan Lakoff ini memiliki kegunaan yang seimbang dalam film ini.

Kata kunci: *Fitur Bahasa Wanita, Lakoff, Encanto, Film*

1. Introduction

The sociolinguistics study has emphasized how gender affected the way language is used. Through language, it will form a human's behavior through the way they speak. For instance, the way women speak politely, talkative, and powerless more than men, from those ways has formed how women speak in society. Lakoff in his book *Language and Women's Place* (2004) cites language is not fundamentally about gender, but basically about the power involved. Women are in most cases known to be more subordinate and lack status in society (Lakoff, 1975). Meanwhile, if women speak powerfully and use strong words, society will judge them for delivering rough utterances. Contrasting with men, they are expected to express their feelings directly even though they deliver rough utterances. Thus, Lakoff contends that men are entitled to stronger exclamations, while women are entitled to 'weaker' exclamations. It indicates men are freely expressing their expression rather than women have a limited way to express their expression because of society's insight.

Through those contrasts, it can show us the behavior between men and women in daily life. The behavior of men, Lakoff (2004) cites the way men speak more assertively, wisely, and straight to the point. It is different if women using language are more fickle. They are expected to speak politely and carefully to maintain themselves as a guard of society (Holmes, 2001). The way women speak using polite words carefully is to secure their faces and also the interlocutors' faces. It correlates with the opinion women should not express their emotions and temper while delivering

utterances. Lakoff (2004) classified women's language characteristics into ten categories. those are, lexical hedges, tag questions, rising intonation on declarative, empty adjectives, precise color terms, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super polite forms, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress.

Concerning women's stereotypes above, a phenomenon related to language and gender was found in the *Encanto* Movie by Disney. The movie was published in 2021 and tells the story of Mirabel as the main character struggling to find her 'miracle' for her big family's protection. As a woman, Mirabel never gave up to take care of her family, although at the beginning she was underestimated because she was well-known as a destroyer and hated by her sister. The researcher chose this film since it was just released and is about women's positions today, which are no longer weak. In the *Encanto* movie, Mirabel is the descendant of the most influential family in a village, and she should get a 'miracle' as her other sister and brother gets. However, in the age of Mirabel should take her 'miracle', unexpectedly the door that will lead Mirabel to open her 'miracle' is lost and the light dimmed off. Since that incident, she tries to find her 'miracle' by herself. However, at the end of the movie, she finally found her 'miracle' that saved her family from destruction.

Several previous studies also have similar topics on women's language. First in 2021, Vicky Valery and Rosita Ambarwati examined how Lily employed the sorts of women's language characteristics in Gossip Girl TV in different scenarios in "Women's Language in Social Life: Investigation of Linguistic Features

in Gossip Girl TV Series". Valery and Ambarwati adapted theories by Lakoff (1975) which state about women's language features. They discovered six sorts of women's language characteristics determined by Lakoff: hedges, tag questions, question intonation on declarative sentences, super-polite forms, avoidance of expletives, and intensifiers. The study only discovered five types of women's language employed by Lily in the Gossip Girl TV Series: hedges, tag questions, question intonation on declarative statements, avoidance of expletives, and intensifiers.

Then, Deby Rahmawati (2019), entitled "Women Language Features in RECODE World's Technology Conference: A Sociolinguistic Studies" discusses the women's language features used in public speeches at RECODE World's Technology Conferences. The findings data were analyzed using the theory of women's language by Lakoff on Holmes (2013). According to the theory proposed by Lakoff, the researcher discovered six women's language features implied in public speeches. The six women's language features found are lexical hedges, intensifier, super polite form, avoidance strong swear, empty adjective, and emphatic stress.

Sherin Putri Indanna (2022) conducted a study entitled "An Analysis of Women's Language Features Used by the Three Indonesian Female Travel Bloggers." This study focused on women's language features used by the three Indonesian female travel bloggers on blogspot.com and wordpress.com. The researcher aimed to discuss the women's language features used by the three Indonesian female travel bloggers and the dominant features found in the blog of three female travel bloggers. The findings data script come from 15 written blog posts posted by the three Indonesian female travel bloggers, and the researcher did descriptive qualitative research according to the findings data. On the whole, the researcher found nine types of women's language features those are lexical hedges or fillers, tag questions, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, super polite forms, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress.

Diah Priska proposed a study entitled "The Types of Women Language Features Found in The Fault in Our Stars Movie" (2020) aimed to identify the women's language features used by the female main character. The theory used for examining the findings data is Lakoff's theory (1975) proposed women's language features. To reveal the data, this study used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The study relied on note-taking to collect reliable data. The findings revealed that the female main character used 9 out of 10 types of women's language traits. The findings indicate that intensifiers because the female main character in this movie was a typical feminine girl who always strives to inform the hearers about her emotion or feeling through a sentence, became the dominating type of women's language features pronounced in this movie.

It is related to women's role nowadays being able to be powerful as men do and live as human beings without feeling weak or subordinate anymore (Lisbd.com, 2021). The study aims to examine the scenes of *Encanto* which relate to women's language features stated by Lakoff and identify the most features used in movie scenes.

2. Method

The researcher applies qualitative data for analysis because the conversation involved in the movie presents more word and sentence components than numbers. Qualitative data is commonly explained and indicated in the form of words than numbers form stated by Miles and Huberman (1994). In qualitative data, the researcher involves descriptive research to describe the situation, characteristics, and utterances delivered by the characters as well. In addition, the reason for using descriptive research is to describe and classify utterances in *Encanto* movie based on women's language features. Afterward, the researcher quantifies the data to recognize the most used features by serving the data in percentage form.

The data was collected through documentation techniques. Documentation techniques involve some steps, those are watching, reading, listening, and noting. In the first step, the researcher watched the movie carefully to gain an understanding of the content served. Next, read the other sources such as the script on the internet, and compared it with the movie serve. Third, listening to the utterances of the characters involved aims to identify pronunciation and intonation. Lastly, make some notes for underlining areas of the film that include women's language aspects.

The data is obtained by facts based on the researcher's measurement. The data is served through descriptive things, words, numbers, or even observation. The researcher collects the data by applying primary and secondary data. The primary data source was obtained through the script of the *Encanto* movie and the secondary came from the book and internet sources.

The research conducted qualitative research that involved some steps such as data reduction, data display, and conclusions drawing (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Data reduction step, the researcher selects, chooses, and classifies the utterances based on the features. Beginning of this step, the researcher read and listened to the script through the movie or the script on the internet, then classified the utterances based on the women's features. Through data reduction, the researcher has reduced some utterances that are not by the features. Afterward, the data display presents the data in an organized and compressed form based on classified features. From those processes, the researcher gains the conclusion that the data drawn have been achieved by the researcher and gives a descriptive conclusion of women's language features used in *Encanto* movie and how often characters in *Encanto* movie use women's language. According to Benz, & Newman, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 1984, qualitative research focuses on numbers that helped to explain the situation as well. Therefore, the *researcher* serves the percentage form of the most used features to conclude which features mostly appear in the *Encanto* movie.

3. Result and Discussion
Lexical Hedges

Lakoff (1975) stated that the use of lexical hedges is a signal of a lack of confidence in the speaker in the way they have a speech. Therefore, the way women use hedging devices to express unassertiveness and to persuade the addressee to take the speech seriously. Based on the definition and the characteristic of lexical hedges, the researcher found two utterances that indicate women's language involved in the conversation of the *Encanto* movie. Below are the explanations:

Data 1:
Mirabel and Luisa stand in a weird silence. Their minds are full of unsaid words because of

last night Madrigal cracks happened. Luisa tries to hide what happens to her magic from Mirabel.

Mirabel: *I think you're carrying way too (get squeezed) much.*
Emotional, Luisa picks Mirabel up and hugs her too hard.
Luisa: *Maybe I overdo it.*

Based on the statement above, the speaker uses lexical hedges that indicate the women's character by using '*I think*' as a sign of a lack of self-confidence in uttering their statement. Through these sentences, Lakoff (1975) argues the speaker tries to avoid breaking the rules of politeness in society. Rather than the statement overstepping others' rights, she chose to be unassertive. On the other hand, the way '*I think*' is used in women's language is to preface the conversation that involves personal opinion.

Data 2:
Mirabel sings together with other children to avoid the children's questions about Mirabel's gift.

Mirabel: *Well, "us", I can't just talk about myself. I'm only part of the amazing Madrigal.*

The word '*well*' at the beginning of the sentence is used for a preface of her statement. When women try to start a conversation, but they feel unconfident, women will tend to start with prefaces such as '*well*', '*you know*', and '*maybe*' as implicit in the conversation that indicates uncertainty.

Tag Question
Women in general use tag questions as a sign of expressing hesitation or uncertainty (Lakoff, 1975). When the speaker uses this expression, it indicates the speaker has a lack of information

and doubt to deliver the information in society. There is just one utterance of tag questions used in the *Encanto* movie. The data is below:

Data 3:
The moment Antonio's new room opens to reveal, a huge coco rainforest with animals through the crowd inside, amazes the Madrigal family.

Little Alejandra: *It's bigger on the inside?*

This utterance was delivered by Little Alejandra when she saw Antonio's room as his gift to the Madrigal family. She felt surprised and didn't expect anything about Antonio's gift on that night of blessings. Inside Antonio's room was the view of the rainforest along with the animals inside. Little Alejandra delivered a question as a surprise response and her expectation about Antonio's gift. To make sure of the reality and her doubt, she asked by delivering "*It's bigger on the inside?*" That indicates she was hesitant and unsure about what was in front of her.

Data 4:
Mirabel asks Bruno's help to find out what she should do to fix the cracks. Bruno tries to use his vision to jump to the future to know Mirabel's acts soon. Bruno saw Mirabel and a glowing figure. Bruno stayed focused and saw the shape of a woman. Bruno squinted his eyes trying to interpret what he was seeing.

Tio Bruno: *Wait no, no, no, no -- is that a hug?!*
Mirabel: *Am I fighting or hugging?!*

In this scene, Mirabel is told by Bruno how to rebuild the miracle back to how it was. Bruno told Mirabel, she has to hug Isabela which is Mirabel doesn't have a good relationship with

her. However, Bruno said, she has to do it to bring back the old miracle of *Encanto*. However, she was unsure of Bruno's utterance that told her to hug Isabela. Lakoff (1975) states that the way women use this feature indicates a lack of self-confidence.

Rising Intonation

Lakoff (1975) states that women have differences perceptible in intonation patterns. Women speak with a higher intonation as well to engage more information from the addressee because women commonly speak with uncertainty. In the *Encanto* movie, there are two conversations involving rising intonation features inside. Below is the analysis:

Data 5:

While Antonio's party is going rousingly, Mirabel comes suddenly short of breath after seeing the cracks in Madrigal. Abuela Alma seems wrathful, and Mirabel disturbs the party, again. Abuela Alma needs proof of what Mirabel said.

Mirabel: *The tiles were falling and there were cracks everywhere and... the candle almost went out*.
Abuela Alma : *Show me.Mirabel leads the family to the candle and presents them with... nothing, no cracks, the candle shines brightly.*
Mirabel: *What?* *No, that's --- the cracks were there, they were... everywhere. The house was in trouble, the candle was…*

The conversation above between Abuela Alma and Mirabel indicates the application's rising intonation feature. The word '*What?*' delivered by Mirabel categorizes into the application of this feature because Mirabel is seeking confirmation from someone else there who sees the building. Mirabel tries to get

someone's confirmation that what she saw before isn't wrong.

Data 6:

Bruno tries to tell Mirabel what she should do through his vision to see the future. After a few minutes, Bruno can't see clearly who will help Mirabel to fix the Madrigal cracks. As Mirabel steps forward in Bruno's vision, he sees the person is Isabela.

Bruno: *Almost there... I, I -- I got it! It's... it's... ISABELA?*
Mirabel: *Isabela?!*

The way Mirabel responds to Bruno's question, she tries to make sure who will be able to bring back the old *Encanto*'s miracles. As a rising intonation characteristic, women tend to make sure and get reconfirmation more by questioning the utterance delivered before. The use of an exclamation mark at the end of an utterance shows the rise of the intonation of the speaker.

Intensifier

The characteristic of intensifiers feature is indicated with boosting devices to strengthen the meaning of the utterances (Holmes, 1992). Women are too afraid of being ignored, therefore this feature is used for the addressee to pay attention to her speech. Women are more likely to use this feature than men. Therefore, in the *Encanto* movie, the research found two expressions that indicate an intensifier device's application.

Data 7:

Antonio's room opens and amazes the entire Madrigal family, including Abuela Alma. For the first time, Madrigal gets their gift again after the last time gift of Mirabel was run unsuccessfully. Looking around the rainforest

fully inside Antonio's room makes Abuela Alma believe this is a great sign for the *Encanto*.

Abuela Alma: *So* *perfect and **so** great for the Encanto!*

The use of the word '*so*' above shows Abuela Alma trying to strengthen her speech by using '*so*'. Her speech was delivered when Antonio gets his gift, a rainforest. Abuela Alma points out that this gift will be the transformation of Madrigal's family and *Encanto* soon.

Data 8:
Mirabel introduces her sisters and brothers through a song. She mentioned their gifts, characteristics, and their habits.

Mirabel: *As flowers go everywhere, we find the **very handsome** MARIANO, who catches some of Isabela's flowers.*

The application of intensifier features is to attract the addressee's attention. By using the word '*very*' as in the conversation above, it means the speaker tries to gain attention by giving a boost or a strong device. Mirabel delivered the statement above while she is singing to introduce how her siblings look and the way they act.

'Hypercorrect' Grammar
It is a feature that in general is used by women more than men. The role of the guard in society, women tend to speak based on the standard. On the other hand, women also try to maintain their image in society. The *Encanto* movie found two expressions on 'hypercorrect grammar. Below is the analysis:

Data 9:
Mirable sings enthusiastically with other children to make them forget about their questioning of Mirabel's gift. The song roughly ends when Mirable looks over Abuela in the doorway of the house.

Abuela Alma : *What are you **doing**...?*
Mirabel: *Uh, they were just asking about the family and...*

The way Abuela Alma speaks uses the form of English standard use '*doing*' rather than '*doin*' which indicates 'hypercorrect' grammar features used. Unlike women, as Abuela Alma said above, she tends to use the standard form of English in speaking, even in a simple one, asking about what Mirabel's doing.

Data 10:
Mirabel sings as a sign of lighting up the candle. She also mentions several great words to maintain the light. She opens the glowing entrance doors back to the courtyard where the family is standing excited to see her.

Mirabel: *I would heal what's broken and show this family something new about who I am inside.*

This feature indicates how women consistently use the form of English based on the standard. Women are expected to be a role models in society, so they tend to use 'hypercorrect' grammar features in their utterances. The way men and women speak is contrasting, such as the way men pronounce '*singing*' or '*doing*' commonly with the silent 'g' at the end of the word. Similar to Abuela Alma in previous data, the way Mirabel speaks '*something*', she keeps to the standard of English form to maintain her image as a Madrigal family.

Avoidance of Swear Strong Word

To keep speaking politely, women tend to express their emotions through words like '*oh my gosh*' or '*goodness*' instead of '*shit*', '*damn*', or '*hell*' (Lakoff, 1975). There is one expression indicating the application of avoidance of strong swear words. Below is the explanation:

Data 11:
Since Mirabel gets what would heal the cracks of Madrigal, she tries to persuade Isabela to act normally as a sister. She lowered the tone of her voice and calmed herself. However, Isabela never responds to Mirabel's persuasion.

Mirabel: *Oh my gosh... Isa... that is a very serious confession...*

Since Mirabel is told by Bruno the way the miracle can back as in the beginning, Mirabel has to hug her sister. However, Mirabel tries to persuade Isabela to do it together, from her deepest heart. Isabela still ignores Mirable's explanation while Isabela is sitting on her high flower swing, far away from Mirabel standing. Because Isabela doesn't give any response, Mirable never gives up and tries to avoid strong swear words even though Isabela ignores her. The word '*Oh my gosh*' indicates Mirabel avoids the application of strong swear words to carry out her mission, to bring back the miracles.

Emphatic Stress

Emphatic stress indicates women usually speak about comparing, correcting, or clarifying something. Examples of emphatic stress features that are commonly used by women are '*What a brilliant idea*' or '*He is very handsome in our class*'. The research found two conversations that involved emphatic stress.

Data 12:
After Abuela Alma is amazed by Antonio's gift inside his room, Antonio comes to Abuela Alma to say something about the gift. Before Antonio delivers his utterance, Abuela Alma does it first by saying:

Abuela Alma: *A gift just **as special** as you!*

Abuela Alma said that when Antonio was blessed with her new gift. After the last gift failed on Mirabel's day, as the first thing she had ever seen in the last several years, she expressed her emotion by saying Antonio is special as his gift. Through Abuela Alma's utterances the word '*special*' is a kind of emphatic stress feature. According to Lakoff (1975), women express their feelings using emphatic stress to strengthen what they said.

Data 13:
Mirabel sings a song while she introduces the family she has. She also mentions the uniqueness and character of the family. Even though, she uses a metaphor expression to describe.

Mirabel: *Isabela, she is the **perfect golden child.***

In this scene, Mirabel is just amazed by Isabela's life because she is one of the girls that prioritized her family. Unlike Mirabel, she always accused the cause behind all the destruction of the *Encanto*. The word '*perfect golden child*' indicates Mirabel applies emphatic stress in her utterances to strengthen Isabela as the real dearest girl.

4. Conclusion

The conclusions of the application of women's language features used by *Encanto* movie. There are (a) lexical hedges, (b) tag questions, (c) rising intonation, (d) intensifier, (e) 'hypercorrect' grammar, (f) avoidance of swear strong words and (g) emphatic stress. The researcher did not find any kind of conversation that indicates an 'empty' adjective, 'super' polite forms, or precise color terms. Since there is no relation between *Encanto's* scenes with the three features above.

The *Encanto* movie contains 13 utterances in which women communicate. Those features are divided into 2 lexical hedges (15,4%), 2 tag questions (15,4%), 2 rising intonation (15,4%), 2 intensifiers (15,4%), 2 'hypercorrect grammar' (15,4%), 1 avoidance of swear strong words (7,6%), and 2 emphatic stress (15,4%). The last category includes 'empty' adjectives, 'super' polite forms, and precise color phrases with no case (0%). According to the data, the researcher found no evidence of any of those traits being used in the film.

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